

Drew Devito  
Headache

Allen's head bumbles  
Before he dies in Vietnam.

Brandon.

    Brandon.

Look at Brandon's face  
not his legs.

Brandon was rude.

Brandon is gone. Don't dishonor the dead Allen says.

Maybe they can get you into heaven.

It's like go-fish. Do you have any sevens?

Did you give at church? Did you pray? Did you only fuck after you were  
married?

Oh well I think I have a pair.

Brandon wouldn't be up there

Brandon would smell up heaven

Every step would stink.

Brandon lit a woman on fire.

She didn't talk to Brandon. She didn't talk to Allen. So Brandon spoke to her  
the only way he knew how.

    "Smell -er burn up like that? That's real

fireworks."

Allen wonders if she will talk to him now

Wonders if she can stand his smell.

-1

Allen was a good boy.  
Grew up in Missouri.  
Lived in Missouri.  
Left Missouri.  
Always thought he was going to die  
in Missouri.

Wanted to make Pop proud.  
Should have found him a nice *girl*.  
“Find yourself a nice *girl*.” So then he said he would.

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Randy always walked Allen to school.  
Maybe they walked each other.  
When no one looked, Randy held Allen’s arm.

Allen’s hands were wild when he came back  
From doing things Randy would never see.  
They sent those hands back.

They didn’t even wait.  
They didn’t budge.  
Those hands could get people.

Allen loved Randy’s parents.  
Loved their homemade macaroni.  
Loved their dog wall-clock.

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Loved their dining room table with the floral design.  
Loved their chatty family.  
Randy's Mom always saying he was too quiet.  
Randy's Mom always saying he should speak up more.  
Randy's Mom said she liked when he spoke.

*To Randy:*  
It's so hot at night  
We keep moving  
No one will tell me where.  
I just keep reminding myself  
you said you'll be home.

- *Allen*

-3

To Dead Paulie, Remember  
following                      missiles  
in the nighttime  
rising and  
falling  
right in front of our eyes.  
They were so fast,  
they move slowly  
for me                              now.  
*Remember?* They were our "friendly neighbors."  
But,  
They were so far  
away and whittled down.  
The VC

They were silhouettes

*To Allen,  
From Dead Paulie*

I remember:  
That image burned into my mind  
I force it down  
It comes up anyway.

“Paulie, Paulie  
head down the path over there.”

Punji. Punji. Punji. Punji. Punji.

*Remember* “Get him  
Get him.”  
When I bounced a grenade  
down that tunnel. *Remember?*  
I used call it  
yellow fragrance, *remember?*  
I pulled it and then let it go.

My headache still isn't gone, Allen  
Headache, headache, headache  
Dead Paulie say headache.

Dead Paulie say headache  
in my arms.

Cradle headache like a kid baby  
Headache whispers in my ear, boom I'm a hero Allen.  
Headache sucked my girlfriend dry.  
Headache skullfucks the recruiters back home.  
Dad confound headache with love.

Headache pushes me out from heaven  
Says "it wasn't me, it was him" --it was headache  
Notmenotyou, notmenotyou

Now, our bodies is wailing and weeping Allen  
and we fall through the clouds.

*Dead Paulie and I hit the bottom*

ask them Allen  
ask them  
ask them  
Headache, headache, headache *Allen*  
How did we get here Allen  
Howdie gethere.

I'll ask for you Paul.

The demons repeat,  
"W e h o p e y o u w i l l d i e f o r u s  
w h e n w e s a y."  
Wish I hadn't asked.  
"Fuck you" I said.  
Pop, I'm so sorry.

They repeat,  
“Tell us who is at fault tell us who you blame.”

*I don't know.*

They repeat,  
“Tell us who is at fault tell us who you blame.”

*the VC                      Brandon      Pop*

They repeat,  
“Tell us who is at fault tell us who you blame.”

*Headache, headache, headache*

*Headache*

Covered their eyes

*Headache*

Covered their mouths

*Headache*

Threw them out of helicopters

“We were sent to Vietnam to kill [REDACTED]. But we found instead that we were killing women and children.”

I was left behind.

When I left

the ground  
When around the men.

We pulled them up  
Lifted them in  
Threw them out  
*I'm so  
sorry*

*Pop.*

“How far you think this one'll go

Paulie?”

“Threw him like a bitch, didn't even fall three inches from the deck”

Punji.  
Punji.  
Punji.

Throwing gooks out of the helicopter.  
It was headache.

I was just a silhouette.

I am already familiar with silence Paulie  
The buzzing, ringing  
hollow and shrill tones.  
The silence when my body shakes.  
The silence with the gnats  
    buzzing across  
a buzz in your ear  
    they buzz when            I can't hear what I said  
    they buzz    I can't see what I    did

theybuzztheybuzz  
The gnats, the gnatsheadacheheadacheheadache

Wish I was guilt free  
No guilt free for me

Whomustyoublamewhomustyoublamewhomustyoubla  
mewhomustyoublamewhomustyoublamewhomustyoub  
lamewhomustyoublamewhomustyoublamewhomustyo  
ublamewhomustyoublamewhomustyoublamewhomust  
youblamewhomustyoublamewhomustyoubla

m e  
I'm so sorry  
Pop  
- Allen